

### **REMARKS**

As of the filing of the present reply, claims 1-8 and 10-20 were pending in the above-identified US Patent Application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 3, deemed claims 12-20 (which depend from claim 11) to recite allowable subject matter, and rejected claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10, and 11. In response:

Independent claim 1 has been amended to require “means at lateral regions of the pelvic girdle for connecting the pelvic girdle and the thigh cuff, limiting rotation of the thigh cuff when under the tensile forces of the elastic cables, and maintaining distance between the pelvic girdle and the thigh cuff.” Support for this “connecting, limiting, and maintaining means” can be found in Applicant’s specification at [0015] in reference to the extensions 26 (as well as functional equivalents thereof).

Independent claim 11 has been amended to cancel the limitation regarding “the inner layer comprising lateral portions extending beyond the outer layer at lateral regions of the pelvic girdle,” and has been further amended to incorporate all limitations of its dependent claim 19 pursuant to the Examiner’s conclusion that claim 19 (which depends from claim 11) recites allowable subject matter. With this amendment, Applicant believes that

independent claim 11 and claims depending therefrom are allowable over the prior art of record.

Dependent claims 15, 16 and 19 have been amended to recite “connecting, limiting, and maintaining means” similar in scope to that incorporated into claim 1.

Applicant believes that the above amendments do not present new matter. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-8 and 10-20 are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

### **Rejections under 35 USC §103**

Independent claims 1 and 11 and dependent claims 2, 4-8 and 10 were rejected as being unpatentable over Downs in view of Wallner and Rawlings, and/or over a Euro Med publication in view of Wallner and Rawlings. As noted above, independent claim 11 is now believed to be allowable over the prior art as a result of the incorporation of the limitations of its allowable dependent claim 19. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of independent claim 1 and its dependent claims 2, 4-8 and 10 in view of the claims as amended and the following

comments.

In a comment regarding claim 11, the Examiner suggested “further defining the extensions/soft lining material (as claimed in claim 3) wherein said extension connect[s] said girdle to said cuffs.” Applicant believes claim 1 has been amended consistent with the Examiner’s suggestion by now reciting “means for” performing tasks of the extensions 26 disclosed at [0015] of his specification. Applicant believes that the prior art of record lacks any means by which a thigh cuff (14) is connected to a pelvic girdle (12) to limit rotation of the thigh cuff (14) when under tensile forces of elastic cables (16) connecting the thigh cuff (14) to the girdle (12), and also maintain the distance between the pelvic girdle (12) and the thigh cuff (14). Furthermore, there does not appear to be any basis or motivation for modifying the Downs or Euro Med devices to have such a means.

For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 USC §103.

### **Closing**

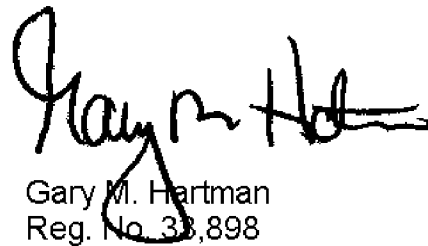
Though the above remarks are primarily limited to certain limitations of the claims, Applicant believes that other limitations of the claims provide

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additional grounds of patentability over the cited references, and Applicant reserves the right to present these additional grounds at a later time if necessary.

Should the Examiner have any questions with respect to any matter now of record, Applicant's representative may be reached at (219) 462-4999.

Respectfully submitted,



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